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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the effects of the Agricultural College Act (1862), which established land grant colleges, on higher education in the United States, focusing largely on the role of Amos Brown, president of The People's College in New York, which served as a model for the Agricultural College Act. Brown's role in the founding of the college in 1853 and its distinct aims training in agricultural and other specific occupations and disavowal of religious affiliations are noted, as is the school as New York State's first land grant college following passage of the Act. Separate sections of the report discuss: Amos Brown's early life; the movement to establish a state agricultural college in New York; the establishment and early days of The People's College; Brown's role in lobbying for the passage of the federal Agricultural College Act and his relationship with its sponsor, Justin Smith Morrill; the quarrels at The People's College that led to Brown's departure; the origins of Cornell University and transfer of The People's College land grant to Cornell; and Brown's unsuccessful efforts to lead Cornell. The paper concludes that Amos Brown might appropriately be considered the "adoptive father" of the Agricultural College Act and the land grant university concept. (Contains 55 references.) (DB)

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AMOS BROWN AND THE AMERICAN LAND GRANT COLLEGE MOVEMENT

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AMOS BROWN AND THE AMERICAN LAND GRANT COLLEGE MOVEMENT

SUMMARY

The passage of the Agricultural College Act is a defining event in the history of higher education in the United States. The phrase "land grant college" is broadly recognized to denote public institutions committed to broad accessibility, to agricultural and mechanical education, to research, and to public service. But in 1862, when the Agricultural College Act was passed, the concept of a "land grant college" was neither well defined nor broadly understood. The bill's principal sponsor, Justin Morrill of Vermont,was not an educator, and had never explained, even generally, what sort of institution the act was meant to support. He later claimed that the very name of the legislation was a mistake.

This leaves a number of questions about the origins of the Agricultural College Act as an educational -- as opposed to financial -- concept. Since the act was passed there have been several serious historical debates about its origin, its purpose, and the political and educational impetus behind it. Morrill and Jonathan Baldwin Turner of Illinois have been acclaimed as "father" of the act. But the case for either of them is weak and in many ways problematic. There was, however, another person who played a major role in the land grant college movement and in the passage of the act. He was Amos Brown, president of The People's College. This study describes Brown's origin, his educational philosophy , and especially his highly influential role in the passage of the Agricultural College Act. The study also describes the practical issues and problems that confronted 19th college leaders in establishing and building their institutions

Introduction

The passage of the Agricultural College Act in 1862 is widely regarded as the watershed from which the modern American public university emerged. The direct, albeit not immediate, effect of the Agricultural College Act was the creation of American land grant colleges. The land grant colleges were a practical means of broadening access to higher education, in terms of both geography and participation.

In the years that followed the passage of the Agricultural College Act, from the late 1860's to the beginning of the 20th century, new universities were founded, existing colleges were revamped and reorganized, and the liberal arts or "classical" college transformed -- all largely on the model of the land grant college. In the half-century prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, various attempts had been made to reform the American college, which itself was for the most part an adaptation of the English model of collegiate education. Successful reforms were few in number and insignificant in terms of practical effect.

Had the spirit and substance of reform been incremental and progressive, the land grant college might then and now have been regarded conventionally as an evolutionary idea whose time had come. In fact, many historians of American higher education take the Whiggish view that the emergence of the modern American university was essentially a matter of progressive evolution. The history of the land grant university, however, is neither that simple nor predetermined.

From virtually the inception of the Agricultural College Act, its origin, purpose, and the political and educational impetus behind it were the subjects of debate. (1) Justin Smith Morrill, the sponsor of the act in the Congress, and Jonathan Baldwin Turner of Illinois were each later acclaimed as "father" of the act and the land grant college movement. There were other contenders as well.(2) But the acclamation of their parenthood -- even if one could agree on which of them really deserved the credit -- did not give clear definition to the movement itself, which for several years was confused and uncertain. In 1862, when the Agricultural College Act was finally passed after a defeat by presidential veto in 1859, the concept of a "land grant college" was neither well defined nor broadly understood.

Even after the act was passed, well into the 1870's, founders of new colleges and reformers of existing ones were unclear about what the legislation actually intended.

The concept of what came to be known as the American land grant college was not, however, without precedent and another, more articulate, spokesman. The precedent pre-dated either Morrill's or Turner's plans. Chartered in 1853 in New York, The People's College was the model of the land grant college which was presented to the public and, more significantly, to the members of Congress when the Agricultural College Act was brought forward, unsuccessfully in 1859 and successfully in 1862. In New York, The People's College was so closely identified with the Agricultural College Act that it, not Cornell University, was the state's originally designated land grant institution.

BACKGROUND

An earlier study of The People's College and its relation to the origins of the Land Grant Act (3) demonstrated that the concept of agricultural education was developed comparatively well by the 1850s, but the particular means of devising a curriculum for agricultural education and organizing it institutionally still were the subjects of considerable disagreement which the Agricultural College Act neither addressed nor resolved. The concept of higher education for the mechanical arts was at most vague and at least non-existent. While various prominent individuals and interest groups supported either higher education for farmers or higher education for mechanics, very few supported both or imagined how they could be combined in a single institution.

Morrill's and Turner's plans -- neither of which was definitive -- were developed sometime between 1855 and 1857. By then interest in higher education for farmers was not new, but for mechanics it was. Agricultural societies and journals in the United States had been promoting agricultural education since early in the 19th century; the idea of a college for farmers can be found as early as 1819. But the pattern by which the movement for mechanical education evolved was unlike that for agricultural education and, Indeed, unlike that for virtually any other area of American higher education. Although both movements comprised similar elements, like societies, journals, and fairs, the movement to found colleges for farmers was considerably more coalescent and homogeneous. While there was no firm curricular definition for agricultural education, there was at least a general

understanding about what it might entail. That was not so for mechanical education, which at times was understood to mean anything from educating architects and civil engineers to training machine operators and skilled tradesmen. Sometimes the mechanic arts were combined with agriculture and taken to mean the manufacture and operation of farm machinery, as was the practice at the Gardiner Lyceum, which is often identified as the first agricultural school in the United States.

Even Morrill and Turner used the terms "mechanic" and "industrial arts" loosely at best, and their plans for higher education were seen and promoted as being designed to serve the farmer almost exclusively. Morrill's bill was named, significantly, the Agricultural College Act. After the bill was passed, the states were uncertain about what it intended for higher education in the mechanic arts. Morrill himself confessed to being uncertain (4).

What the history of The People's College made clear were the educational, as opposed to financial, origins of the Agricultural College Act. The college's history revealed the fragility of the coalitions on which early prototypes of what was to become the land grant college model were founded. It explained as well the role of organized labor and its expectations for what the act was to describe as the "mechanic arts." Studying The People's College also exposed some of the financial and speculative tactics that surrounded the actual awarding and liquidation of the land grants, and which motivated the supporters of some of the colleges.

Despite what is now known about the The People's College, some important questions remain about its leadership and its influence on the land grant college legislation. The President of The People's College was Amos Brown, who, at the college's founding, explained its name and purpose thus:

> We call the institution The People's College, intending . . .the name shall indicate something of its purpose, and the word People's has undoubtedly a particular significance as used in this connection. . .it is meant to suggest. . .that some modification of the prevailing systems of college education in this country is demanded to enable them better to subserve the wants of the people. (5)

The "modifications" of which Brown spoke were significant. Some, at the time, were unusual, even unique. The People's College's first objective was to provide an education that would prepare a student to enter a mechanical trade or take up scientific farming immediately after graduation. In addition to offering courses in agricultural and mechanical subjects, the College would operate model machine shops and a farm, in which students would work as a regular part of their courses of instruction. The College would be fully coeducational; women would not only be admitted to the College, but they would enrol in agricultural and mechanical courses with men and would be awarded the same degree. The College would be open not only to the sons and daughters of farmers and mechanics, but also to farmers and mechanics themselves. Adults would be invited to attend lectures and could defray the costs of their attendance by working on the farm or in the shops with students to whom they would impart their own first-hand knowledge of farming or a trade. By their labour in the shops or on the farm, students would be enabled by the time of graduation to accumulate enough capital to establish themselves in farming or a trade. To graduate, a student would have to demonstrate practical and theoretical competence in agriculture or a specific trade; the College's diploma would expressly specify the trade that the student had mastered.

The aims of The People's College set it distinctly apart from other colleges, and from the various plans for agricultural colleges. Its origins also set the college apart. The tap root of The People's College went to organized labour, a sector that many historians of American higher education have viewed as being uninterested in educational reform prior to the passage of the Agricultural College Act. (6) The College openly disavowed religious affiliations and for a time abjured support from government. The plan for the College called for support from farmers and mechanics alone. At the outset of the movement to found The People's College, large benefactions were actively discouraged.

The People's College was a prototype for the land grant colleges (7) and was presented as such to the Congress during debates on the Agricultural College Act. Moreover, The People's College was the initial land grant college in New York, America's most populous and powerful state at the time of the Agricultural College Acts' passage. Amos Brown, as the college's president, was the primary lobbyist for the Act. Despite their importance to the Agricultural College Act and to the concept of the land grant college, neither Amos Brown nor, until relatively recently, The People's College is known

well to history. Their backgrounds and origins were, particularly in the case of the College, outside the mainstream from which the land grant college is conventionally thought to have emerged.

An historical examination of the life of Amos Brown can reveal several significant aspects of the formation of the land grant college idea and its practical application. Brown actually built a physically new kind of college, recruited and appointed a faculty, dealt with the novel coalition of interest groups that supported The People's College, and with the new and remarkable concoction of educational ideas -- agricultural education, mechanical education, coeducation, local "boosterism", accessibility for the "industrial classes" -- that the college represented. He did all of this ten to twenty years before other college presidents took up similar challenges. For example, almost every one of these issues and ideas was on the agenda of the Convention of the Friends of Agricultural Education which met in 1871 to review the progress of the land grant colleges. (8) (The convention was an annual event that evolved into the Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges in 1887.)

Tracing Amos Brown's own educational philosophy -- as opposed to that of The People's College -- is also important. Unlike many of the supporters of The People's College, Brown was not a radical. His early education and ambitions were relatively conventional. His ideas were the product of evolution instead of revolution, although in the end he would fervently promote and largely embrace all that The People's College stood for. Since Brown met face to face with most of the members of the U. S. Congress and the New York State Assembly in securing the passage of the Agricultural College Act and the subsequent award of the New York land grant to The People's College, his own educational views must have been broadly exposed. More significantly, the extent to which Brown molded the original idea of The People's College to suit legislative politics reveals even more what the proponents of the Agricultural College Act thought the institutions that would be founded under its auspices would be like.

Early Life

Amos Brown was a New Englander. His boyhood was spent on his father's farm in Kensington, New Hampshire, where he was born in 1804. After attending the local district school, Brown, at the age of 18, entered nearby Hampton Academy with the intention of preparing himself for

medical school. At Hampton he came under the influence of the local Congregational minister, who persuaded him to commit his life to the ministry. After leaving Hampton Academy Brown taught in several district schools throughout New Hampshire while preparing himself for Dartmouth College, which he entered in 1829. At Dartmouth he studied theology and was especially interested in moral philosophy and metaphysics. He did not like the sciences and did not study them. He graduated from Dartmouth in 1832 with a good scholastic reputation.

After graduating from Dartmouth, Amos Brown enrolled at the Andover Theological Seminary. He had been there only a few months when he was offered the principalship of an academy in Fryeburg, Maine. He taught at Fryeburg for one year and then returned to Andover, where he remained until 1835.

In the fall of 1835 he was named principal of Gorham Academy, also in the State of Maine. He headed Gorham Academy for a dozen years and earned a reputation as an educational innovator and organizer. Brown's innovations -- at the time his plan was known as the "new departure" -- were that Gorham Academy would offer a special program to train teachers, would be fully co-educational, and would be staffed entirely by professional educators, all of which were novel practices at the time. The Academy flourished under Brown's leadership and enjoyed a reputation that attracted students from several states. In addition to being a dynamic principal, Brown was himself an excellent teacher. Horace Mann, who visited the Gorham Academy, called Brown "one of the best teachers in New England". (9) Brown's teaching style was "rather to draw out, than pour in" and, thereby, to stimulate his students to think independently. (10)

Brown also exerted an influence on the State of Maine's educational system. In 1846, he was one of four persons who were appointed to review schools throughout the state. One result of the review was the formation of the State Board of Education, on which Brown served in 1849. That there was a State Board of Education at all was of some significance. School reform through the foundation of boards of education with the power to tax and regulate was not popular with manufacturers, farmers, and many working class parents, all of whom depended to a considerable degree on child labour and saw no need for popular schooling. The fight for school reform through boards of education was led by

professional educators like Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and to a smaller extent Amos Brown. Mann's association with Brown continued through the 1860's.

While Amos Brown was innovative and energetic, he was also zealous, temperamental, and self-righteous. He quarreled often with the trustees of Gorham Academy, and finally resigned in 1848 to accept a call to the pastorate of the Congregational Church in Machias, Maine. He devoted himself to the ministry and enjoyed it, but after three years in Machias, his irascible personality resulted in his dismissal by the congregation.

In the summer of 1852 he toured New York in search of an academy where he could return to teaching. He stopped for church services in Ovid, a small village on the northeastern shore of Seneca Lake, where he discovered a small unsuccessful academy in need of leadership.

The Ovid Academy, opened in 1827, had known good years and bad. By 1852 the bad years outnumbered the good and the school had only about six students. Brown promised the trustees of Ovid Academy that he would revive the school and make it a success. A particular item in Brown's plan for Ovid Academy was the introduction of a course in agricultural science, which he thought would appeal to the academy's trustees, most of whom were farmers. He was right. The trustees were impressed by his plans and were particularly attracted to the agricultural science proposal. A specific term in the formal agreement between Brown and the trustees of the Academy was that the trustees would annually raise $600 by subscription to pay one teacher to provide instruction and deliver public lectures in agricultural chemistry and botany.

Brown himself was not competent, either by interest or training, to teach courses in agriculture. He, therefore, hired William H. Brewer, a young man who had recently graduated from the agricultural chemistry course at Yale. All of the other teachers whom Brown hired were persons who had been his associates or students at Gorham Academy. Ovid Academy opened the 1852-53 school year with five teachers -- two of whom were women -- and 23 students. Within three years the Board of Regents could describe the Academy as the best organized school in the state. (11) Ovid Academy was so successful that by 1855 it had outgrown its building and was planning to change its name to the Seneca Collegiate Institute. At the dedication of the Academy's new building, which was completed in

1855, one of the speakers delivered an address that called for the revitalization of the State Agricultural College, which although chartered, had been moribund since the fall of 1853.

New York State Agricultural College

While the idea for an agricultural college in New York can be found as early as1819, impetus for a college for farmers became strongest after 1841 when the New York State Agricultural Society was reorganized and strengthened by an act of the state legislature which gave the Society a mandate to promote agricultural education through a publishing program. Between 1842 and 1852, six bills calling for the establishment of a college were introduced on the Society's behalf, but none was passed.

In 1853 two events occurred which caused the legislature to favour a charter for a state agricultural college. The first was the election of a new president of the State Agricultural Society. John Delafield was a strong leader and influential spokesman for farm interests. Under his leadership, a new bill was prepared and introduced. The second and more important event was the introduction of a bill to charter The People's College. The movement to found The People's College originated in a labour organization called the Mechanics' Mutual Protection, an organization with which Amos Brown was not at that time associated.

At its inception in the late 1820's organized labour was not interested in education. In the 1830's some labour groups took strong political positions in favour of educational reform in the common schools, but there still was no interest in higher education or in mechanical education as such. In the unpropitious times that followed the Panic of 1837 and, coincidentally, as manufacturing processes became more specialized and industrial technology advanced, the educational attitudes of labour organizations that represented mechanics and skilled tradesmen began to change. Some of these organizations and the mechanics' newspapers that they sponsored took strong positions in favour of education designed specifically and exclusively for the mechanic.

In 1848, by which time the Mechanics Mutual Protection had about 10,000 members in 250 chapters, it became interested in higher education and one year later introduced a proposal to establish a

college for mechanics and artisans. The Protection's scheme received much popular support and attention. The People's College Association was formed to raise money for the College. In 1852, the Association had a bill drawn up to charter the College by the legislature.The legislature approved the bill on April 12, 1853. Two days later a charter was approved for the State Agricultural College. Although the legislature had previously defeated six similar bills to found an agricultural college, the passage of The People's College bill made it politically untenable to oppose the State Agricultural College.

While the name of the State Agricultural College bill suggests that it was a publicly supported institution, it was not. The State Agricultural Society had sought an appropriation from the state treasury for the College, but it had been denied. The People's College, faithful to its principles, had not sought an appropriation. The Society's plan was to locate the college on Delafield's farm in Fayette, thus reducing a major capital cost of the project. But Delafield died only a few months after the College was chartered, and the project foundered while the movement to found The People's College moved enthusiastically forward.

By the end of 1855, following a speech calling for revitalization of the State Agricultural College, Amos Brown was developing plans to petition the legislature to permit the college's charter to be transferred to a new board of trustees and have the College located in Ovid. The keystone of Brown's scheme was an unused fund in the State's treasury from which he hoped to obtain a long term loan with no interest. On March 1, 1856, the legislature passed a bill -- which Brown had personally lobbied through the preliminary committees -- that would allow the college to be transferred to Ovid and would provide a loan of $40,000 on the condition that the new trustees raise an identical amount.

In less than one year Brown and the trustees raised about $47,000 through the sale of subscriptions. Most subscriptions were small and came from local farmers. But only a few of the subscriptions were paid in cash, and the state comptroller refused to advance the loan until the trustees actually had $40,000 cash in hand. Brown was not dismayed. He persisted in his efforts to raise the needed funds.

Brown's success, even though it was not complete, ironically encouraged the college's original board of trustees to reorganize. They met in Albany in the spring of 1857 and in Ovid in June. As vacancies occurred on the new board, they were filled by members of the old board. At the June meeting, the old members were able to place Arad Joy and John E. Seeley on the new board. Joy and Seeley were also trustees of the Ovid Academy and both had had strong disagreements with Brown about his management of the academy.

Although the state comptroller had not released the loan earmarked for the State Agricultural College, the trustees -- both old and new -- expected that the conditions necessary for the loan to be made would soon be met. In anticipation of the unpaid subscriptions being honoured and the loan made, the trustees met in July, 1857, to select a president for the college. Brown hoped and expected that he would be selected. But he had made enemies on the board, as he had done twice earlier in his career. His principal opponent, Arad Joy, not only had quarreled with him, but also wanted the presidency for his son, Charles A. Joy. Even some of Brown's admirers were not confident that he was the best person to head the College. They knew first-hand that he was a difficult person with whom to get along. His closest associates at Ovid Academy, W. H. Brewer and J. W. Chickering, agreed that Brown's personality ranged mercurially from genius to instability. (12)

When the vote was taken to elect a president for the State Agricultural College, Amos Brown was not chosen. Ironically, Charles Joy -- who, as a matter of fact, was well qualified for the position -- was not chosen either. The College was managed to its disadvantage by a committee until 1858, when Samuel Cheever was appointed president. Cheever, a political hack, was so lacking in competence that W. H. Brewer concluded that "had the Trustees been actively searching . . . for a man unfit for the place they could not have been more eminently successful. (13) Cheever's inept leadership and the financial depression of 1857 combined to stall further development of the State Agricultural College.

The People's College

Amos Brown was disappointed and bitter about his rejection by the State Agricultural College, but within weeks he was offered the presidency of The People's College, which was moving

towards completion in Havana, not far from Ovid. The trustees of The People's College knew Brown and his work at Ovid, but it was the college's principal benefactor, Charles Cook, who championed Brown's nomination. Cook and Brown had met and become closely acquainted when both were in Albany lobbying for their respective interests -- Cook, for the designation of Havana as a county seat and Brown for the loan for the State Agricultural College.

It was Charles Cook's interest in boosting Havana that had drawn him to The People's College. Cook had made a fortune on canal and railway projects. One of the projects brought him to Havana, which he developed extensively and where he eventually owned more than a dozen businesses and several farms. Cook was a harsh person. Even his admirers confessed that his personality was abrasive and domineering. On several occasions his business and civic ethics were publicly criticized. Cook was neither an educated nor intellectual person. He was active politically, but was not associated with any of the many reform movements that characterized New York politics in the 1840's and 1850's. Cook never had been employed as either a mechanic or farmer. Throughout his entire association with The People's College, Cook's only explanation of his motives was that he wanted to make Havana a "little Oxford". (14) But The People's College, even by the broadest definition, was the antithesis of Oxford.

It was Charles Cook's desire to promote Havana and his business interests there which motivated his interest in The People's College. In 1853-54 Cook had led a fight to create a new county from the area surrounding Havana. He won, but soon discovered that other towns in the new county had aspirations to be named the county seat. Another political battle ensued in which competing towns sought to prove themselves worthy of being the county seat. Cook saw The People's College as an asset that could not be matched by other towns. Through his fortuitous meeting with Brown in Albany, he learned that state funds could be got to finance a college. To attract The People's College to Havana, Cook offered its trustees $25,000, a building site, and a farm. Cook's offer was formally accepted early in 1857.

Amos Brown was enthusiastic about The People's College and eagerly accepted the offer to become its president. Although his organizational ability, gift for teaching, and zealous talent for fund-

raising were attractive qualities, Brown was in several ways a peculiar choice for the presidency of The People's College. His entire academic training was in theology and philosophy. He not only had no background in the sciences, he did not like them. W. H. Brewer, who knew him well, said that Brown had "less mechanical instinct than any other intelligent man" he had ever known. (15)

Brown introduced an agricultural course at Ovid Academy, but did not study or teach agricultural science himself. One of his students at the academy, who later became president of a land grant university, especially remarked that Brown lacked knowledge about agriculture.(16) Even if Brown had been knowledgeable about agriculture, his ideas for agricultural education were unlike those that had been proposed for The People's College. Although they had had some doubts initially, the Mechanics' Mutual Protection and, later, the People's College Association had decided that the college should not offer the classical collegiate course; the college, they insisted, would offer courses in mechanical and agricultural education exclusively. One of Amos Brown's principal plans for Ovid Academy and the State Agricultural College was to develop an agricultural program around a core of the classical collegiate course.

Given his efforts to obtain a loan for the State Agricultural College, Brown obviously believed that the state should be called on to support higher education. The proponents of The People's College had decided that, as a matter of principle, the College should abjure support from the public treasury.

None of these attributes recommended Amos Brown for the presidency of The People's College. But there were others that did. One of the college's most difficult public relations problems was its plan to be fully coeducational. Coeducation was not popular. Brown had successfully fought a battle for coeducation at Gorham Academy and was personally committed to the concept, mainly because so many teachers were women. Throughout his career Amos Brown was inconsistent about many things, but a lodestone was his abiding interest in teaching teachers, including women. Most organized opposition to coeducation came from religious groups. As a clergyman, Brown could effectively present the College's case to its opponents.

Brown also was flexible and saw the merits of compromise coupled with promotion. His reform and revival of the academy at Ovid, and his plans for the State Agricultural College demonstrated these qualities, which were the very qualities that Charles Cook quickly noticed. Brown's greatest attributes for presidency of the college were his experience and the strength of his personality. After Charles Cook's patronage had been accepted, the college's board of trustees became divided between trustees who had been appointed by the Mechanics' Mutual Protection and the People's College Association who wanted a college that would serve mechanics and farmers, and trustees who were appointed through the influence of Charles Cook and who wanted a college -- any college -- that would boost Havana .

The old trustees had many disagreements with Charles Cook, who personally dominated the board's affairs. The new trustees were more trustful of Cook, but were concerned that he was away from Havana too often to give the college the leadership that it needed. The selection of a strong president with educational experience, therefore, became an imperative for old and new trustees alike, which was in significant contrast to the political bickering among the trustees of the State Agricultural College.

Predictably when strong personalities meet there is conflict. The college's president and its principal benefactor were not always in agreement. Brown soon became concerned that Cook was neither competent to handle the affairs of a college nor committed to education. Brown even doubted that Cook had any clear-cut objectives for the college. "Mr. Cook," he said, "has been operating too much without a plan and has injured the concern, but probably not seriously. His no policy operation will have the effect to kill my efficiency." (17) Given Brown's later relationship with Justin Morrill, he might have said the same thing about him. What Brown was trying to do with "efficiency" was to recruit a faculty, develop a plan of studies, and respond to hundreds of students who were applying to the College even though it was not open.

Brown's plans for the college departed significantly from the plans set earlier by the Mechanics' Mutual Protection and the People's College Association. His plans called for three separate courses of study and 23 professorships. The courses of study were designated the Classical, the

Scientific, and the Provisional or Select. The first two would award the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science respectively; the Provisional course would offer no degree and had no specified terms of enrolment. Requirements for admission to the courses were dissimilar, which suggests that the Classical course was intended to be more rigorous than the Scientific, and both more rigorous than the Provisional. The specific requirements for admission to the Classical course were no less strict than those to any liberal arts college, nor were they any different. As far as admissions requirements were concerned, the Scientific course was a diminished version of the Classical course. This was a pattern not uncommon in other colleges that had begun to offer courses in the sciences, but had not accorded to them full academic respectability. In its two primary courses, then, Brown's plan was neither remarkable nor unusually progressive.

If requirements for admission were indicative of academic respectability and importance, the Provisional or Select course was held in no esteem by Brown. The course was not a coherent program, but was simply an opportunity to take courses randomly, provided that the student did not get in the way of students in the other two courses. It was in the Provisional course that students might learn applied skills in mechanical and agricultural education.

Brown's plans placed him at odds with the old trustees, who were committed to the college's offering a rigorous course in mechanical and agricultural education. While they were not adamantly opposed to the Classical course, they thought that it would be of little value to farmers and mechanics. The idea of extensive and stringent admission requirements also clashed with the original plans for the college, which had called for easy and broad access to the school.

Brown's plan included a manual labour provision, but it was tangential to the course of study rather than part of it. The plan for The People's College, as first conceived, went significantly beyond the manual labour idea by making work on the College's farm and in its machine shops an integral part of the courses of instruction. The College's building was designed around a steam engine and machine shops.

Deeds often speak louder than words, and with greater historical clarity. Despite the differences between Amos Brown's plans for The People's College and those of the Mechanics'

Mutual Protection. Brown could claim two important accomplishments: the college's construction was completed, a model farm purchased and stocked, and a faculty recruited and appointed. The physical expression of the college was entirely consistent with the plans put forward by the Mechanics' Mutual Protection and publicized in the college's prospectus that Brown would later use in lobbying the Congress.

The faculty who had been recruited principally by Brown, despite the occasional interference of Charles Cook, also was the sort of faculty called for in the Protection's plans. So, while Amos Brown had an educational philosophy different from that of the college's principal sponsors, what he actually did was in full accordance with their plans, which significantly were the public plans for The People's College.

The faculty recruited by Brown was remarkable. By 1864 eleven academic appointments had been made, including Brown himself who was professor of intellectual and moral philosophy.The majority of these appointments -- nearly three out of four -- were in agriculture and the mechanic arts. An examination of the catalogues of the land grant colleges and universities from the decade that followed passage of the Agricultural College Act indicates that none of them, even the larger institutions, had an equivalent faculty in these areas. At Cornell University, for example, a professor of "practical mechanics" was appointed but in fact taught mathematics and physics because he did not have the models or equipment needed to teach mechanical subjects. (18) Courses in mechanics were not actually offered. The university's farm was at the outset at best and embarrassment and at worst a disgrace. The agricultural faculty, who were eventually recruited with great difficulty, were not fully competent. (19) The Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University (which was the State of Connecticut's original land grant institution) reported the same problem in launching a program in the mechanic arts. (20) At the University of Minnesota, as late as 1871, deliberate plans were made to delay the establishment of an educational farm. (21)

A final note about the faculty who were recruited by Amos Brown: two of them became leaders in the land grant college movement. Williams Watts Folwell became the president of the University of Minnesota. W. H. Brewer became a professor of agricultural chemistry at the Sheffield

Scientific School. It appears that Brown sought and was able to find quality in making appointments to The People's College's faculty.

The Agricultural College Act

The differences between Brown and the trustees over his plan of studies were not immediately resolved, for late in 1857 Justin Smith Morrill introduced a bill that would become the Agricultural College Act. Two months before Morrill's bill was introduced, Amos Brown had asked the College's trustees to endorse a resolution that called for him to visit Washington and "procure the passage of a bill . . . making appropriation of a portion of the public domain for the promotion of education in the several States similar in kind to that provided for in the plan [the original plan] of The People's College". (22)

Although Brown's scheme had progressed to a point where arrangements were being made for its presentation to the Congress, he was still drafting the proposal when he learned about Morrill's bill. According to W. H. Brewer and J. W. Chickering, who were with him at the time, Brown was having breakfast when he read for the first time about Morrill's bill in a newspaper and decided on the spot that he should immediately go to Washington to work for the bill's passage. (23) The college's trustees concurred and authorized payment of Brown's travel expenses, which over the next four years were considerable for a college that was neither fully built nor fully in operation.

Amos Brown arrived in Washington on January 4, 1858. Other than a letter that Brown had sent ahead to announce his mission, Morrill knew little about The People's College or its president, but he soon was working closely with Brown. According to Morrill, when Brown arrived in Washington "he entered very zealously into canvassing for votes for the bill . . . He was not only a willing worker, but discreet about exciting hostilities where he was unable to secure favour". (24)

Through his lobbying, Brown promoted The People's College as well as Morrill's bill. In Washington, he linked the college with the bill by distributing circulars describing the college to every person with whom he talked about the bill, thus leaving the impression -- which Morrill knew about and made no effort to refute -- that The People's College was a model of the colleges that would be founded under the auspices of the land grant. Significantly, the circulars described the plans that the

Mechanics' Mutual Protection and the People's College Association had set for the College, not Brown's new plan. In New York, newspapers began to refer to Morrill's bill as "the People's College bill".

The course of Morrill's bill was slowed by the delaying tactics of its opponents; the final vote did not take place until February 7, 1859 -- nearly 14 months after the bill was introduced. During these months, Amos Brown spent most of his time in Washington, returning to Havana only for short visits and when the Congress was not in session. When the bill was passed, The People's College's trustees were jubilant since, by dint of Brown's lobbying, they expected the college to be a principal beneficiary of the bill. Plans were made "for planting People's Colleges . . . in all the states". (25) But the joy was cut short. Two weeks after its passage, the bill was vetoed by President Buchanan, primarily on the grounds that it violated constitutionally guaranteed states' rights.

When the bill was vetoed, prospects for the college became discouraging. The college building was underway, teachers wanted to join the faculty, and students wanted to enrol, but there was not enough money to open the college. Most of the money that Brown and the trustees were able to raise was being applied directly to completing the college's building. In January, 1860, a bill was introduced in the New York legislature which called for an appropriation of $100,000 to establish a permanent endowment for two years beginning in 1862.

The grant was never paid because the college was unable to meet all of the conditions of the legislation -- the most significant was that the college should own the building for which its charter called. The state's comptroller refused to make the payment on the grounds that Charles Cook held liens against the building and title to the land on which it was located. The only realistic hope remaining for the college was that Morrill's bill -- or one like it -- could be passed under a new administration.

When the Congress reconvened in December, 1861, Amos Brown was again on hand to lobby for Morrill's bill. Morrill initially was not enthusiastic about reintroducing the bill; instead, he thought that he should give all of his attention to coping with the tragedy of civil war. But he did

decide finally to reintroduce the bill. Brown remained in Washington and by the end of January had met with nearly every member of the House of Representatives to promote the bill and, coincidentally, The People's College. While the constitutional problems that had impeded the bill in 1859 were no longer present, the bill was opposed, mainly on sectional issues. Brown was eager to launch another lobbying campaign, but Morrill attempted to dissuade him in the belief that any further efforts would be in vain. Morrill, on Brown's suggestion, decided to ask Benjamin Wade, Senator from Ohio, to introduce the bill in the Senate and thereby circumvent the opposition in the House. The tactic worked. After several debates and with a few minor amendments, the Agricultural College Act was passed on June 11, 1862, and signed by President Lincoln on July 2.

There was no doubt that New York would decide to take advantage of the Agricultural College Act. The main question was what institution would be designated to receive the benefit of the land grant. Although some consideration was given briefly to establishing five new colleges throughout the state, only The People's College and the State Agricultural College had plausible claims to the grant. The State Agricultural College was still moribund, but its charter remained in force. The trustees, led by Cook and Brown, began immediately to take the steps necessary to secure the land grant for The People's College. Their first step was to identify the College even further with the Agricultural College Act. Amos Brown's efforts in Washington had linked the act and the College in the eyes of the Congress, but the question about which college would receive the proceeds of the land grant would be decided in Albany, not Washington. Therefore, Brown prepared a detailed account of his work in behalf of the act and the board of trustees procured letters from several members of the Congress who described Brown's contribution to the legislation. The account and the letters were distributed to the legislature. Senators Wade and Fessenden called Amos Brown "father" of the Agricultural College Act. (26) But the most influential letter came from Justin Morrill, who said that the bill's passage was "due to him [Brown] and the institution of which he is head" and that the legislature should acknowledge the contribution in awarding the proceeds of the land grant. (27) Coming from Morrill, who was known for his unwillingness to share credit with anyone (28) this was powerful testimony in the college's favour .

On May 14, 1863 the legislature awarded the proceeds of the land grant to The People's College, on the conditions that within three years the College should have ten "competent" professors, a fully stocked farm of 200 acres, a fully equipped machine shop, a library, scientific apparatus, and a completed building that could accommodate 250 students. A final and most important condition, evidently aimed directly at Charles Cook, was that all of the college's property had "to be held by the . . . Trustees absolutely . . ." (29) Cook still held liens against the building and title to the land.

Until the conditions of the bill were met, the college could collect not one cent of the proceeds of the land grant. The college's victory was, therefore, far from complete. Compliance depended on Charles Cook, but his attitude towards the college had become strangely erratic. When he spoke before the committee of the legislature to which the bill to make the college the state's land grant institution had been referred, Cook assured the members that all of the lands, buildings, and equipment needed to meet the terms of the Agricultural College Act would be provided, presumably by him. When the committee had drawn up the bill in final form, the members called Cook's attention to the conditions with which he would have to comply. Cook replied "with strong emphasis that he would do no such thing". (30) Cook was ill when the bill was being discussed in the Senate, but he sent a spokesman to assure the members that he would indeed comply with the terms of the bill. The bill was thereupon approved. Shortly thereafter he told a member that "those were conditions that never would be complied with, and that he would see the Legislature in -- Heaven before he would do it". (31) In 1865, in reference to the same incident, Daniel Dickinson, who was a trustee of The People's College, said that "the People's College, so far as Mr. Cook is concerned, is a standing and impenetrable mystery to me. If its history were written in Sanscrit I could read it as well". (32)

When confronted about his ambivalence towards the college, Cook replied that he would not transfer title to the property to the trustees until the college had actually received the land grant. But the state would not convey the proceeds of the land grant to the college until the trustees held clear title to the property. Cook's stance placed The People's College in a dilemma. And the dilemma was sadly ironic for Cook must have assumed that land or land scrip would be given to the land grant colleges. The Agricultural College Act specifically provided that the land or land scrip had to be sold by the

states and the proceeds of the sale used to create an endowment for the land grant colleges. Neither the states nor the colleges could themselves hold the land or land scrip. They had to sell it. Cook's motive evidently was to speculate in the sale of land scrip by purchasing it at prices below which the actual land that the scrip represented was worth or in time would be worth. This was hardly a remote possibility given that most of the persons who purchased land scrip were speculators (33) and given Cook's commercial interest in the college. The land grant had made the college even more attractive to the boosters of Havana.

It was Charles Cook's behaviour that led to Amos Brown's downfall as president of The People's College. When the trustees met in June, 1863, to consider how they might comply with the terms imposed on the college by the legislature, Brown proposed that they again press Cook on the question about ownership of the college's land and building. Cook at first reacted angrily. He said that he would convey clear title to the trustees, but would also resign from the board and demand immediate payment of all debts due him from the college. Cook's ultimatum was curious because the trustees' debt to him (for most of the building material used to construct the college) was less than his debt to them in the form of an unpaid subscription pledge. The trustees found Cook's offer unacceptable and the question of ownership remained unsettled.

Cook did not resign from the board, but did remain angry with Amos Brown, whom he held responsible for the trustees' demand for him to relinquish title to the college's land and building. Cook wanted Brown removed from the presidency. At first he pressured Brown indirectly by demanding a full accounting of the president's expenses in Washington and, later, by demanding that Brown pay rent on a house that Cook owned and allowed the college to use as a home for its president. Cook interfered with Brown's attempts to recruit a faculty. In one case Cook not only made an appointment on his own, but also failed to inform Brown about it. Cook sent the college's comptroller, instead of its president, on an important mission to Albany. On his part, Brown resented Cook's intrusion into areas in which he thought that Cook was incompetent. He clearly was distressed by Cook's refusal to aid the college in meeting the terms of the legislation by which it could receive the proceeds of the land grant.

As Cook and Brown quarreled, other members of the board of trustees became more and more active in the day-to-day business of the college. Despite the problems of divided leadership, The People's College opened in the spring of 1864. Although opened, the College still was not able to comply with the terms of the state's land grant legislation.

In the summer of 1864, the dispute between Charles Cook and Amos Brown came to a head and a resolution calling for Brown's dismissal was introduced to the trustees. The trustees supported the resolution. Some trustees did so because they were associates of Cook. Others did so because they disagreed with Brown's new plans for the college. Brown, then, was opposed by old and new trustees alike. In August, 1864 Amos Brown and The People's College severed their relationship. The parting was not amicable.

Cornell University and the New York land grant

Amos Brown remained in Havana and watched the progress of The People's College. Other persons were watching the college, too. On February 4, 1865, a newly elected member of the state's Senate introduced a motion to require the Board of Regents to advise the Senate "whether or not . . . [The People's College] is, or within the time specified . . . is likely to be, in a condition to avail itself of the [land grant] fund". (34) The Senator who introduced the resolution was Andrew D. White. He and another freshman Senator, Ezra Cornell, had been keeping a close eye on The People's College and particularly on Charles Cook, on whom they believed, correctly, the college's success depended.

White had a grand plan for an American university equivalent to Oxford and Cambridge. Cornell had a long-standing interest in agricultural education. He had been a trustee of the defunct State Agricultural College and had carefully studied the plans for The People's College. (35) Initially White and Cornell had disagreed about how the land grant fund should be used. Cornell had wanted to divide the land grant fund between the State Agricultural College and The People's College. White had adamantly insisted that the land grant should not be dissipated by division, but should be used intact to support a new university, his vision for which went well beyond either the State Agricultural College or The People's College.

Cornell was persuaded to White's point of view and offered to add $500,000 in addition to the proceeds of the land grant to found a new university. Before initiating any action in the legislature,

White and Cornell attempted to persuade the trustees of The People's College to relinquish their claim to the land grant and pledge their support to the new university. Most of the trustees refused even to discuss the idea with White and Cornell. Finally, after a proposal was made to select some of the new university's trustees from the board of The People's College, four of the college's most influential trustees agreed to support White and Cornell. The four trustees -- Horace Greeley, Erastus Brooks, Daniel Dickinson, and Edwin B. Morgan -- had been appointed to the college's board by the People's College Association and were supporters of the original plans for the college. Charles Cook and his associates on the board remained opposed to White and Cornell's plans for a new university.

There was a hidden hand at work in devising the proposal that gained the support of the College's trustees. Amos Brown had gone to work for Ezra Cornell. It was Brown's idea to appoint trustees from the college to the board of the new university in order to deflate opposition to White and Cornell's plans. (36) After legislation to revoke the land grant from The People's College and create Cornell University was introduced in February, 1865, Brown continued to work personally for Ezra Cornell. Like Andrew White, Brown was firm in insisting that the land grant fund should not be divided, but should be used in its entirety to support a single great university. Brown's plans for The People's College were more like White's plans for Cornell University than the Mechanics' Mutual Protection and the People's College Association's plans. W. H. Brewer once talked with Brown about his plans:

> His [Brown's] views were so broad; he was so enthusiastic and hopeful that I thought him not merely optimistic, but visionary. He was aiming for so great and broad an institution that I thought it positively visionary to even hope for its realization. I argued with him that he could not expect to build up a Heidleberg in Chemistry, a Berlin in Philosophy, a Harvard in Natural History, a Yale in Agricultural Chemistry, a something equally brilliant in Technology, . . . He thought otherwise. "Why not? Why not? Why not?" he repeated over and over again. (37)

Andrew White might have said what Brown did; their views were much alike. It is not surprising, then, that Brown could easily turn his support to White and Cornell. Not everyone was sympathetic to Brown's turn of allegiance. He was publicly accused of being "selfish and vindictive" in betraying The People's College. (38)

The introduction of the bill to create Cornell University and strip The People's College of the land grant was, as Andrew White observed, "a signal for war". (39) And war it was. Every college in the state, except Columbia, came forward to claim the benefit of the land grant fund. The battle was

waged in the newspapers and in the legislature, both on the floor and behind closed doors. Some factions argued positively in favour of their own interests while others simply attacked the Cornell proposal.

Amos Brown worked earnestly for the Cornell bill. An especially strong obstacle to the bill's being passed was the claim of Genesee College to the land grant. The college was a Methodist school located in Lima. The college's claim was no better or different than that of any other college, but it was supported by a large and powerful block. Methodists throughout the state supported the college on the one hand because it was a Methodist school and on the other hand because Cornell University would be non-sectarian or, as they put it, "Godless". Although there is some contradictory evidence about the precise nature of the pact, (40) Ezra Cornell promised to pay $25,000 to the trustees of Genesee College if they would abandon their claim to the land grant and withdraw their opposition to the Cornell bill. Amos Brown was deeply involved in the negotiations that led to the agreement between the college and Cornell. Although he was a Congregational clergyman, Brown was well known and had many influential friends among Methodist leaders.

With the removal of the opposition of Genesee College, White and Cornell were able to bring their bill forward to a favourable vote in the legislature. Under the terms of the bill, The People's College had 90 days in which either to fulfill all of the terms of the bill that had assigned the proceeds of the land grant to it or to deposit a sum of money ($185,000) sufficient to enable it to fulfill the terms after 90 days had elapsed. The college could do neither without Charles Cook's support. He refused. On April 26, 1865, Amos Brown, who had maintained close contact with the college, reported to Ezra Cornell.

> Mr. Cook has disclosed that he has given his last cent to The People's College. The term of study . . . is, as I understand, to close today, & the Professors are to be dispersed to seek their forage elsewhere. You will, as I predicted, have an open sea. (41)

Amos Brown felt that he was due some reward from Cornell University because of the service that he had rendered in connection with passage of the Agricultural College Act and the bill to found the University. There is some evidence from which to suppose that he thought that he should be named to the presidency of Cornell. W. H. Brewer reported that Ezra Cornell privately asked him whether or not Amos Brown should "be connected with the new University in a prominent position". Brewer told Cornell that, while he appreciated Brown's ability and contributions to education, he thought that Brown "had personal peculiarities that would work serious friction in the

starting of a new university". (42) Although Ezra Cornell in the end nominated Andrew White for the presidency of the university, he had previously told him that he had one other candidate in mind. (43) Amos Brown was the logical alternative.

Whether or not he desired the presidency or had any reason to expect that he should receive it, Amos Brown definitely thought that he should get something. In March, 1866 Brown wrote to the board of trustees of Cornell and asked for remuneration. The trustees acknowledged that Brown's service to the university had indeed been valuable, but refused to concede that he had a just claim or, even if he did, that the board was empowered to honour it. Horace Greeley and Erastus Brooks, formerly trustees of The People's College, then introduced a motion that called on Cornell University to employ Brown "in some department where his abilities can be made use of." (44) The motion was not carried.

Having failed to receive satisfaction from the trustees, Brown took his appeal to Andrew White, to whom he complained that the action of trustees had been "calculated to humble me". (45) He also made it clear to White that his claim was based on his work for the Cornell bill and for the Agricultural College Act, without which, Brown baldly contended, Cornell University would not have been founded. To support the latter claim Brown produced all of the letters that the trustees of The People's College had procured when seeking the land grant for the College and added another from Senator Ira Harris of New York. (46) White discouraged a meeting between Brown and himself and finally demurred altogether.

Brown next turned to Ezra Cornell personally. He told Cornell that White had agreed that the Cornell bill would not have been approved without his help. (47) Cornell was not sympathetic to Brown's request for a financial reward. He argued that he had already paid Brown for his services in accordance with an agreement that they had made when Brown first began to work for him. (48) With Cornell's refusal, Brown abandoned his claim.

At the same time that Brown was negotiating with Andrew White and Ezra Cornell, he learned that the Illinois Agricultural College was seeking a president. Brown made several inquiries about the

position and arranged to have recommendations written in his behalf, but in the end was not offered the job. (49)

Conclusion

Amos Brown remained in Havana, where he preached in local churches and took an interest in The People's College, which was reopened briefly under the auspices of the Masonic Order. He died there on August 17, 1874. In his lifetime he had worked to build two academies, the New York State Agricultural College, The People's College, and Cornell University. In each case he made significant contributions. While it probably is an exaggeration to say, as some of his contemporaries did, that Amos Brown was the "father" of the Agricultural College Act, it is quite reasonable to say that he deserves large credit for the Act's being passed and for promoting a tangible image of the type of college that the Act would cause to be founded.

The debates in the Congress about the Agricultural College Act did not centre on its implications for higher education. Morrill, in fact, was never definite about what he had in mind for education in agriculture and the mechanic arts. Through Brown's campaign in Washington, The People's College was presented as a model of the colleges that would be founded under the auspices of the land grants. Since Brown met with nearly every member of the House of Representatives and worked closely with Benjamin Wade in the Senate, we can reasonably suppose that Amos Brown's educational ideas were in the minds of most Congressmen as they voted on Morrill's bill.

A particular impact of Brown's lobbying and of the plans for The People's College was on the concept of higher education for what Justin Morrill called the "mechanic arts". Morrill himself advanced only three arguments in favour of the Agricultural College Act: public lands were being wastefully and aimlessly given away, persons who received public lands should be educated in their use, and the United States needed to keep pace with European advances in agricultural and mechanical science. (50)

Congressional debate, however, was not joined along the lines offered by Morrill. In fact, considering the historical significance of the Agricultural Education Act, Congress' debates about it were ironically devoid of educational consideration. What few references there were -- Morrill's own

comments not excluded -- dealt almost exclusively with agricultural education and public land policy. The exception was the The People's College is origins in the Mechanic's Mutual Protection, which effectively defined who mechanics, as an interest group, were, and the specific plan for the college which described how a college for mechanics would be organized and run.

What else can we learn from Amos Brown's career? His experience at The People's College reveals a tension in the movement to found an alternative for farmers and mechanics to the traditional liberal arts college. On the one hand, Brown, as president of The People's College, was under pressure from persons who were interested primarily in founding a college devoted exclusively to agricultural and mechanical education, with practical instruction as an integral part of the course of study. On the other hand, Brown was personally disposed to the classical collegiate course to which he thought agricultural and mechanical courses should be added tangentially. There existed as well a tension between educational reformers -- whether they preferred a radical change like The People's College or an amendment of the existing form like Brown's or White's plans -- and local boosters, like Charles Cook, who wanted a college -- any college -- for the commercial benefits and civic pride that it would engender.

The competition among cities and towns to win the location of The People's College strengthens the thesis that there was much local support for colleges before 1860. (51) The competition also indicates a tension between educators and local boosters. Many of the College's local supporters, including its primary benefactor and Amos Brown's initial patron, were not especially interested in agricultural and mechanical education. Instead, they were interested mainly in commercial advantage. Whatever The People's College's purpose or Amos Brown's interest in promoting it, the case for the college as advanced by Brown was almost exclusively educational. To Brown and the most, but not all, of the supporters of the College, educational reform was an end in itself.

Regardless of the rate at which the land grant college movement evolved, or at which institutions the land grant model was actually deployed, it is clear that the political and economic authors of the Agricultural College Act had at best a cloudy educational vision. When the members of Congress were called on to vote in support of the act, and when state legislators were subsequently

asked to designate the institutions that were to receive the land grants, the educational definition on which they relied was The People's College (49) as promoted by Amos Brown. Historical credit for that should go to him.

As for Justin Morrill, his role and contribution seem to have been mainly financial and political. When asked directly about his role, Morrill usually and carefully insisted that he had drafted the Agricultural College Act on his own, but he rarely implied more than that, perhaps recalling that the act said very little about education. An examination of Morrill's larger career demonstrates that he was unsually competent in matters of public finance. Even if the Agricultural College Act had never been introduced, Morrill would deserve a prominent place in American history as the financial architect of the Federal government's military effort in the Civil War.

The land grants themselves, as a financial device, need to be put in a larger context. Within the span of about one year, the U. S. federal government made 532 million acres of public land available for three purposes: settlement (the Homestead Act), railway development, and higher education. Of the 532 million acres, only 17 million, barely three per cent, were for higher education under the Agricultural College Act. Since these were not the first grants for education in the United States, and were comparatively small in relation to overall land policy, one might reasonably ask why they were notable aside from the specific and novel purposes of the Agricultural College Act.

In practical effect the arrangement was very clever. By the mid-1800s federally held public lands were very unevenly distributed. Some states neither held nor could claim any at all. Yet the educational concept of the Agricultural College Act was national. The proceeds of the sale of the land grant scrip were in effect spent by the states. Thus a federal asset was converted with visible equity to a state asset for a federal objective. While such matching arrangements became common in the next century, they were unusual -- in fact, ingenious -- at the time, especially in terms of maintaining a precarious balance between state's rights and the Constitutional prerogatives of the federal government.

As for Jonathan Baldwin Turner, a final note from a series of discussions in 1871 might explain his role. One might aver, as some have, that what Turner called the "industrial university" really meant what later came to be understood as the "mechanic arts" in the Agricultural College Act.

Neither of the sponsors of the bill ever acknowledged such a role on Turner's part. In 1871 the Friends of Agricultural Education met in convention in Chicago under the auspices of the Illinois Industrial University. On the agenda, despite the name of the group, was a review of the progress of land grant colleges in introducing programs in the mechanic arts. A number of speakers took pains to distinguish the introduction of courses of study in the mechanic arts -- which at the time virtually no land grant institution had done -- from expanding accessibility to higher education for the "industrial classes" which was a quite different although apparently similar concept. (52) This was not the first use of either the concept or the phrase. Turner himself had used it in 1851 when he called for a "University for the Industrial Classes." (53) More significantly in terms of the origin of the mechanic arts in the Agricultural College Act, Turner was still referring to the "industrial classes" nearly ten years after the bill was passed. Also in 1871, at the laying of the cornerstone of the Illinois Industrial University, Turner said that it really didn't make any difference that only a very small number of students in land grant institutions actually graduated in "industrial pursuits." The main point, he said, was that the "industrial classes" should have the opportunity to attend university. (54) This, of course, was the same point that the representatives of the land grant colleges were making at about the same time at the Convention of the Friends of Agricultural Education. Thus Jonathan Baldwin Turner's role was the promotion and perhaps crystallization of the social objective of expanded access to college and university study, which has since become part of the warp and woof of American higher education. But it would be hard to give Turner credit for the Agricultural College Act itself, or for its passage.

Of the claimants to the authorship of the land grant college idea, Amos Brown's case is strongest in terms of giving educational expression to the concept of what a land grant college should be. He did this as the principal lobbyist for the legislation in 1857 and again in 1862, and as the founding president of a college -- The People's College -- which actually embodied the concept.

To summarize and conclude with the metaphor of parenthood, it would not be correct to describe Amos Brown as the natural parent of the land grant college. It would, however, be very reasonable to describe Brown as the powerful, loyal, and experienced adoptive parent of The People's

College ideal, the Agricultural College Act, and the land grant college concept that they together engendered.

Brown did not invent the idea of The People's College. It had its own, virtually unique, grass roots origin in organized labour. But Brown developed the idea, gave it tangible meaning, and saw it through to maturity as the educational embodiment of the Agricultural College Act. Without his organizational skill and experience, the college would not have been built and a faculty recruited for it. In the absence of his extremely effective and influential lobbying in Washington and Albany, the college would never have received the land grant designation and the educational stature -- albeit brief -- that went along with it.

As for the Agricultural College Act, its educational meaning, to the extent that the act was taken to have a firm educational purpose at the time of its passage, was defined by Brown and The People's College. Brown played a pivotal political role as well. After the first bill was vetoed and civil war had broken out, Justin Morrill did not want to reintroduce the legislation. It was Brown who devised the plan to redirect the bill to Benjamin Wade in the Senate, and who took full responsibility for the lobbying and manuevering necessary for its ultimate approval (55). So in this sense too Amos Brown was the act's adoptive parent, taking over from Justin Morrill when Morrill turned his attention elsewhere. Wade, for his part, seemed to have appreciated the bill's political importance but not its educational significance. (56)

The question of parenthood can be taken one step furtehr towards precision by asking whether or not either child -- The People's College or the Agricultural College Act -- could have survived were it not for its adoption by Amos Brown.

In the case of The People's College the answer is quite clear. The trustees of the college were correct when they appointed Brown. The college desparately needed a leader with organizational skill, academic experience, and a talent for lobbying and promotion. Charles Cook, the college's principal benefactor, had none of these attributes, and in the end was more a liability than an asset. While the trustees were relatively benign, none of them could have played the roles that Brown did, nor did any of

them aspire to. This should not be surprising given the typical membership of the Mechanics' Mutual Protection.

The People's College didn't last long after the New York land grant was redirected to Cornell University. But that it lasted as long as it did, and achieved considerable prominence in its short life, are attributable almost entirely to Brown. In his absence the college probably would not have progressed beyond the stage of the Mechanics' Mutual Protection's prospectus.

In regard to the Agricultural College Act and the land grant college model the answer to the question about survival is less straightforward. By 1862 Justin Morrill had indeed given up on the bill and was satisfied to pass the torch of leadership to Amos Brown and Benjamin Wade. With Morrill's and Wade's blessings (57) Brown took it up, and in doing so filled the vacuum of the bill's educational meaning and, in turn, secured the necessary political support for the bill.

But while the Agricultural College Act's path to approval would probably have been longer and rockier without Amos Brown's leadership, it would have been approved sooner or later, particularly once its states' rights opponents were no longer present to vote against it, and the then president had no strong compunction about vetoing it. Moreover, westward expansion would have continued to force the question of proper disposition and management of federal lands.

1. The political meaning of the Agricultural College Act and the motives of its supporters and opponents have been interpreted in different ways. The significant points of view are represented in these articles: A.G. Bogue, "Senators, Sectionalism, and the 'Western' Measures of the Republican Party," in David M. Ellis, ed., The Frontier in American Development, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1969), pp.20-46; Paul W. Gates, "Western Opposition to the Agricultural College Act, "Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 1941), pp.103-136; George Rainsford, Congress and Higher Education, (The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1972), chapter six; and Earle D. Ross, "The Land-Grant College: A Democratic Adaptation," Agricultural History, Vol. 15, No. 1 (January 1941), pp.26-40.

Questions about the authorship of the Agricultural College Act were first raised in 1907 by Eugene Davenport's "History of Collegiate Education in Agricultural," Proceedings of the Society for the Promotion of Agricultural Science, 1909, pp.43-53. Further questions were raised by Liberty Hyde Bailey, ed., Cyclopedia of American Agriculture, (Macmillan, New York, 1909), Vol. IV, p.409; and Edmund J. James, The Origins of the Land Grant of 1862 (The so-called Morrill Act) and Some Accounts of its Author, Jonathan B. Turner, (University of Illinois, Urbana, 1910).

For a summary of the debate, see Earle D. Ross, "The 'Father' of the Land-Grant College," Agricultural History, Vol. 12, No. 2 (April 1938), pp.151-186.

2. Roger L. Williams, The Origins of Federal Support for Higher Education, (Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 1991), pp.1-9.

3. Daniel W. Lang, "The People's College, The Mechanics' Mutual Protection, and the Agricultural College Act," History ofEducation Quarterly, Vol. 18, No. 3 (Fall, 1978), pp.295-321.

4. In 1867 William H. Brewer, then on the faculty of the Sheffield Scientific School, asked Morrill about the origins of his bill. Morrill agreed that the name of the bill was unfortunate, but he did not contend that the land grant colleges should be mechanical schools. Instead Morril talked about "business pursuits" rather than "industrial" education. William H. Brewer, " The Intent of the Morrill Land Grant," MS in William H. Brewer Papers, Yale University.

5. Havana [New York] Journal (September 11, 1858).

6. Alexander James Field, "Educational Expansion in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts: Human Capital Formation or Structural Reinforcement?" Harvard Educational Review, Vol.46, No.4 (November, 1976), pp. 521-552.

7. Merle Curti and Vernon Carstersen, The University of Wisconsin, 1848-1928 (Madison, 1949), p.28.

8. Richard A.Hatch, ed., An Early View of the Land-Grant Colleges, (University of Illinois Press,Urbana, 1967).

9. J.W. Chickering, "Amos Brown," n.d., MS in William H. Brewer Papers, Yale University.

10. Ibid.

11. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, December 15, 1893, Brewer Papers.

12. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, February 4, 1894, Howard Papers; and J.W. Chickering, "Amos Brown," n.d., MS, Brewer Papers.

13. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, March 11, 1894, Howard Papers.

14. Quoted in Harrison Howard, "Reference Book," p.71, MS, Howard Papers.

15. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, March 11, 1894, Howard Papers.

16. "Address by W.W. Folwell," May 26, 1924, MS, Howard Papers.

17. Amos Brown to William H. Brewer, May 9, 1861, Brewer Papers.

18. Morris Bishop, Early Cornell, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1962), p. 169.

19. Ibid., pp.156-159.

20. "Convention of the Friends of Agricultural Education,1871," in Richard A. Hatch, op.cit., pp.81-82.

21. Ibid., pp.50-51

22. "President Brown's Report," September 15, 1862, MS, Bramble Family Papers, Cornell University.

23. William H. Brewer to Mary J. Fields, October 11, 1909, Brewer Papers; and J.W. Chickering, "Amos Brown," n.d., MS, Brewer Papers.

24. Justin S. Morrill, memorandum, n.d., 1874, quoted in William B. Parker, Justin Smith Morrill, (Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, 1924), pp.262-271.

25. Alonzo I. Wynkoop to Harrison Howard, February 10, 1859, Howard Papers.

26. Benjamin F. Wade to Edwin B. Morgan, December 1, 1862, and W.P. Fessenden to Edwin B. Morgan, December 6, 1862, Howard Papers.

27. Justin S. Morrill to Edwin B. Morgan, December 1, 1862, Brewer Papers.

28. David Madsen, "The Land-Grant University: Myth and Reality," in G.Lester Anderson, ed., Land-Grant Universities and Their Continuing Challenge, (Michigan State University, Lansing, 1976), p.30.

29. Laws of New York, Chapter 511 (1863).

30. New York State Constitutional Convention, Vol. IV, (Weed & Parsons, Albany, 1868), p.2822.

31. Ibid.

32. D.S. Dickinson to A.D. White, February 28, 1865, quoted in Carl Becker, The Founders and the Founding, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1944), p.231.

33. Paul W. Gates, The Wisconsin Pine Lands of Cornell University, (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, 1965), pp.27-34.

34. Cornell University, Laws and Documents Relating to Cornell University, 1862-1883, (Cornell University, Ithaca, 1883), p.10.

35. A copy of The People's College Prospectus annotated in Ezra Cornell's hand-writing is in the Ezra Cornell Papers, Cornell University.

36. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, March 11, 1894, Howard Papers.

37. Ibid.

38. Penn-Yan Express, April 21, 1866.

39. Andrew D. White, Autobiography, (The Century Co., New York, 1905), Vol. I, p.300.

40. New York State Constitutional Convention, Vol. IV, p.2820. See also, Nancy Beadie, "From Academy to University in New York State: The Genessee Institutions and the Importance of Capital to the Success of an Idea, 1848-1871," History of Higher Education Quarterly, Vol. 14 (1994), pp. 13-38.

41. Amos Brown to Ezra Cornell, April 26, 1865, Cornell Papers.

42. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, March 11, 1894, Howard Papers.

43. White, Autobiography, Vol. I, p.307.

44. Proceedings of the Board of Trustees of Cornell University, April 1865 - July 1885, (Cornell University, Ithaca, 1940), pp.6-12.

45. Amos Brown to Andrew White, January 14, 1867, Andrew D. White Papers, Cornell University.

46. Ira Harris to William H. Punell, December 8, 1866, Howard Papers.

47. Amos Brown to Ezra Cornell, July 10, 1868, Cornell Papers.

48. William H. Brewer to Waterman T. Hewitt, March 11, 1894, Howard Papers.

49. Amos Brown to A.D. Smith, November 18, 1867, Archives, Dartmouth College.

50. Congressional Globe, 35 Congress, 1 Session, pp.1692-1697.

51. David B. Potts, "'College Enthusiasm!' As Public Response, 1800-1860," Harvard Educational Review, Vol. 47, No. 1 (February 1977), pp. 28-42.

52. "Convention of the Friends of Agricultural Education," op. cit., pp. 72-87.

53. Richard A. Hatch, ed., Some Founding Papers of the University of Illinois, (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1967), p. 9.

54. Ibid., p. 138.

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57. President Brown's Report, September 15, 1862, Bramble Papers.